



Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: May 10, 2023.

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

Minutes

Members in Attendance: John Aslanian., Bill Copithorne. (DPW), Lenard Diggins., Melissa Laube., Scott Smith., James Stubbe., Laura Swan. (Chair), Shoji Takahashi.

Members Absent: Beth Benedikt., Jeff Maxtutis., Tycho Nightingale., Corey Rateau (APD).

Members of Public in Attendance: Petru Sofio.

1. Administration

A. Notice of Remotely Conducted Meetings.

The Chair provided notice regarding Remotely Conducted Meetings, referring the members to the agenda attachment entitled “Governor Charles Baker’s 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law”. The Chair reviewed the meeting ground rules and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

B. Introduction to new Transportation Planner.

TAC welcomed John Alessi, Senior Transportation Planner, DPCD. He worked previously for the Town of Malden and previously for MassDOT.

C. Approval of April 12, 2023 Meeting Notes.

Minutes for the Meeting of April 12, 2023, were approved.

D. Nominating Committee update.

Scott Smith and Jim Stubbe said that the Nominating Committee will nominate officers for vote at the June meeting. Laura Swan, Jeff Maxtutis, and Shoji Takahashi have agreed to continue in their roles.

The Nominating Committee is proposing to add one member to the Executive Committee to provide additional assistance with administrative tasks. This position will be Co-Chair or Co-Vice Chair, as permitted under the By Laws.

E. Meeting Calendar.

Laura Swan asked TAC Members to check their calendars for availability for the July and August meetings.

F. Correspondence sent/received from 3/4/23 to 4/6/23.

- **“Crossing Concerns [on Dow Ave]”**, Letter from the Select Board to TAC 4/12/23.

Dow Ave is a collector road from Route 2 and feeds to Dallin School. It has a sidewalk on one side. Bill Copithorne noted that this roadway is not on the near-term agenda for sidewalk work, although public feedback may affect prioritization. Melissa Laube is the Working Group for Dow Ave and Rhinecliff St. With an additional TAC person to join the Working Group, it can also examine this issue.

- **“Massachusetts Avenue Improvements – Abutter Concerns”**, Letter from Bryan Zimolka to TAC, 4/12/23.

The points of the letter were covered in person at the April meeting. The concerns will be shared with the appropriate contacts of the Design Review Committee.

- **“Massachusetts and Appleton”**, memo to Select Board from TAC, 4/12/23.
- **“Downing Square Signage”**, memo to Select Board from TAC, 4/12/23.

2. Public Comments (for information only, not for action).

Scott Smith announced ABAC invitations to its (1) Spring Social at the Jefferson-Cutter House on Saturday 1pm, and (2) the Bike Arlington Tour on Sunday May 21 at 9:30am.

3. Town Issues/Activities (not already on the agenda).

A. Update from the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Bill Copithorne said that the contractor for the Chestnut St Pedestrian Safety Project is ahead of schedule. The curb and sidewalk will be completed in June. Sourcing of granite pieces for bump outs has been challenging. As an add-on

tree planting areas, sidewalks, and ramps in the Russell Lot are being completed. The bid and contract for the RRFB is being prepared.

The curb ramps contractor is scheduled to start in July. Pavement preservation (rubber chip seal) is scheduled to start in August.

River St speed feedback sign contract with MassDOT is being finalized.

In response to a question from Scott Smith, Bill Copithorne responded the bidding process is underway for the Alewife Bridge project. Wayne Chouinard is finalizing plans, and DPW should have an update next month.

B. Update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).

John Alessi is in his third week at DPCD. Complete Streets prioritization is being reviewed and updated with coordination of the fifteen projects among DPCD, DPW, and APD. There will be a public meeting to discuss the Complete Streets prioritization in June. Laura Swan and Scott Smith added that TAC and ABAC would like to provide input on the Complete Streets prioritization.

Two additional BlueBikes Stations are scheduled to-be installed by the end of June.

C. There was no update from the Police Department (APD).

4. Update: Summer St near Sunset Rd.

The Summer St crosswalk will be completed by the Chestnut St contractor after the Chestnut St project is completed. Bill Copithorne met with neighbors on Summer St and Sunset Rd, and he said that Wayne Chouinard has no concerns on the installation of the crosswalk.

5. Vote: Thompson School.

Laura Swan summarized the memo. The recommendation is to retain two-way traffic on Wellesley Rd, and paint crosswalks and edge lines. Bill Copithorne said that DPW is preparing a memo to the Select Board.

A motion to send the Memo to the Select Board passed unanimously.

6. Update Gray St.

Laura Swan and Beth Benedikt made two visits to Gray St near Churchill Ave. They did not see many pedestrians crossing Gray St, and noted that automobile speeds seemed fast. TAC has visited this location in the past. One conclusion is that a crosswalk is not recommended at Churchill Ave because of poor sightlines caused by the roadway grade.

Bill Copithorne said that he will obtain pedestrian counts in the late afternoon.

Laura Swan recommended that speed data be acquired. This might be location where traffic calming would be useful to help pedestrians cross Gray St.

John Alessi inquired about the Town's past speed calming projects. Laura Swan responded that the Town has used strategic narrowing of the roadway (e.g., bump outs, edge lines). The Town also has installed speed feedback signs. There have been early discussions on speed tables and speed bumps. DPW has raised concerns about maintenance for vertical elements.

Scott Smith concurred that horizontal narrowing has been done (e.g., bike lane installations, removing a travel lane on Mass Ave in East Arlington, and part-time bus lane on Mass Ave in East Arlington). The Town is taking a cautious, deliberate approach on vertical elements.

Petri Sofio noted that the Design Review Committee's 25% plan at Mass Ave/Appleton included raised crosswalks and left-turn hardening to reduce turning radii.

7. Discussion: Jason St and Hillsdale Rd.

Jason St is a residential street with many pedestrians and an entrance to Menotomy Rocks Park. Speed collection on Jason St was delayed due to the pandemic. Jason St and Hillsdale Rd form an "island". There are no marked crosswalks in a large expanse of asphalt with long pedestrian crossing and a wide turn radius.

Scott Smith said that this area was examined by TAC. Notably, residents did not want a roundabout at this intersection. Bill Copithorne said that Jason St was resurfaced ~2017, and Wayne Chouinard had developed concepts in the area before resurfacing.

Laura Swan said that it would be useful to hear the previous feedback and proposed ideas. She added that the Oakland/Wachusett/Prospect reconfiguration might be way to improve the intersection.

Jim Stubbe asked for clarification on the problem and supporting data. Laura Swan discussed obtaining speed data and observing pedestrians in afternoon. Scott Smith added that the busiest time in this location is the evening rush hour, as Pleasant St is backed up causing an increase in cut-through traffic, and Menotomy Rocks Park is being used.

Shoji Takahashi recalled the slow streets program during the pandemic, and suggested installing temporary measures at Hillsdale Rd to try geometry changes and seek resident feedback.

8. Update: Dow/Rhinecliff Crosswalk.

Melissa Laube spoke with the resident who wrote the letter. The utility pole and tree branches obscure the crosswalk. The crosswalk paint is faded.

Is there a way to improve signage? The existing sign on the utility pole is a blind driveway sign. There is not much room for additional signage. Is it possible to relocate the utility pole?

Bill Copithorne responded that moving a utility pole is very challenging. He added that DPW tries not to post signs on utility poles. Crosswalk painting is performed every year, but it does wear away and faded. In discussion with the Tree Warden, DPW can trim tree branches (of trees on private property) that block signs and sightlines.

Melissa Laube will writeup recommendations including short-term and long-term plans for when the Town resurfaces the street.

9. Pedestrian Flag Materials.

Pedestrian flag canisters need to-be made. John Aslanian and Jeff Maxtutis will make the canisters. Corey Rateau (APD) has pedestrian flags.

10. Project List.

John Alessi will review the TAC project list and compare it to the DPCD project list to help with prioritizing projects. He will coordinate prioritization with DPW.

Bill Copithorne said that after TAC submits its recommendations to the Select Board, its task is complete. Scott Smith agreed and added that following up on its recommendations promotes accountability in the Town.

11. Data Collection

Laura Swan is compiling a list of speed data Scott Smith added that data collection should be prioritized with looking at crash data. He provided a crash data map.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.